



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Agency for Toxic Substances
and Disease Registry
Atlanta, GA 30333

March 6, 2012

Dear Resident:

I am writing to update you on new information that may affect the findings of the Public Health Assessment for the Lane Street Ground Water Contamination Site.

As you may know, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) last summer released a report evaluating how public health may have been affected by contamination at the Lane Street site. ATSDR released this draft Public Health Assessment for public comment on August 8, 2011, and the comment period lasted until September 23, 2011. ATSDR found that there are no current public health concerns regarding exposure since homes that used the affected private wells have all been switched to the Elkhart municipal water supply. ATSDR also determined that, in the past, pregnant women who drank well water with high concentrations of trichloroethylene (TCE) may have had an increased risk of having children with birth defects.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been reviewing its toxicological assessment for TCE for several years. In late September 2011, the EPA finalized its updated assessment of TCE's toxicological effects. ATSDR is in the process of updating its procedures for evaluating TCE's health effects to reflect EPA's new information.

There is still no concern about current exposures near Lane Street because no one is known to be drinking water from contaminated private wells, and we still believe that past exposures to TCE in some wells were of concern. However, to make sure you have the best information about how contaminants from the Lane Street Ground Water Contamination Site may have affected health, ATSDR will conduct a thorough re-evaluation of the potential effects of past exposures using the new scientific information available for TCE. We will release another draft of the Public Health Assessment for public comment so you have a chance to give feedback. This draft may not be released for a few months because we are reviewing our science carefully.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (770) 488-0768. You can also call Dr. Mark Johnson, ATSDR's Senior Regional Representative in Chicago, at (312) 353-3436. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jill J. Dyken, PhD, PE (ATSDR Site Lead for Lane Street)
Environmental Health Scientist
Division of Health Assessment and Consultation

cc:
Local Officials